



February 4, 2016

Senate Committee On Judiciary
Oregon Legislative Assembly
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 1556

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Kruse, Senator Gelser, Senator Thatcher, President Pro Tempore Rosenbaum:

The Oregon Network of Child Abuse Intervention Centers strongly supports SB 1556, which expands the definition of physical injury in Oregon Criminal Code to include physical trauma when the injured person is a vulnerable victim.

Child Abuse Intervention Centers (CAICs) throughout Oregon help coordinate the community response when there are concerns of child abuse, and provide intervention and follow-up services and referrals to children and families. Over 6,700 children each year are served at Oregon CAICs.

Children who have experienced physical abuse, especially very young children, may not be able to articulate the pain an injury inflicts, and even extensive bruising may not qualify as a “physical injury” under the current law. The language in SB 1556 was drafted using language taken from ORS 167 “Offenses Against Animals” to redefine physical injury to include bruising.

It is striking that even in 2016, we are still using laws established to protect animals as the basis for new laws to better protect children. We urge you to join us in supporting SB 1556.

Sincerely,

Patty Terzian
Statewide Manager, ONCAIC